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Transliteration from Hebrew into Arabic

Submitted by Israel**

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Transliteration from Hebrew into Arabic

Paper presented by Israel

This transliteration system which is now official in Israel, as described in the national report of Israel under item 4 of the provisional agenda, had to solve the problem of the Hebrew consonants ?, ?(both romanized as *v*), ? (hard *g*), ? (*p*) and ? (*ts*) as well as the vowels *e* and *o* , which all have no direct formal equivalent in the classical Arabic alphabet. In the case of most Hebrew consonant letters there is no problem, because the majority of Hebrew letters have a direct and precise equivalent in Arabic. However, there are the above exceptions. This is distinct from e.g. Egyptian Arabic in which the letter *jim* is the equivalent of Hebrew ? (*gimmel)* and pronounced not as *j* but as a hard *g*. However, some Persian and Malay (Jawi) consonant letters are already being widely used in the Arabic transliteration of western words, among others in the Arabic press in Israel, and these have been incorporated in the new rules to represent the three Hebrew consonant letters for *g*, *p* and *v*. Thus, Hebrew ? (*g*) is represented by Persian *ch* (Arabic *g* but with three dots below it); Hebrew *pe* (*p*) by Persian *p* (Arabic *b* but with three dots below); and Hebrew undotted *bet* , ? (*v*) as well as ?which have no equivalent in Arabic, and their Persian equivalent is the Arabic letter for *w* (*waw*), is represented by the Malay letter for *p*, i.e. Arabic *f* but with three dots above it.

Both Hebrew and Arabic are defective alphabetic scripts; vowels are mostly represented by markers. But whereas Hebrew has five basic vowel sounds (*a, e, i, o, u*) with some modifications, Arabic has three – fat'ha, dammah and kasra (*a, u, i*) with their phonetic variants. Adequate approximation to Hebrew *e* and *o* had to be introduced. Stress, too, has to be accounted for, often introducing an additional *alif, ya* or *waw* just as in Hebrew *plene* orthography. Word endings, too, have to be adapted, and in certain cases *fat'ha-alif* substitute for Hebrew *kammats-he*. The system has chiefly to serve Arabic -reading users of road signs and maps and enable them to read Hebrew place names in Israel.

Abstract

The new transliteration system from Hebrew into Arabic was ratified in .May 2007. It solves the problem of properly representing the four Hebrew consonant letters ?, ?, ?and ? as well as the vowels e and o, which have no equivalent in classical Arabic, by letters from the Persian and Malay (Jawi) alphabets. Stress and word endings were also dealt with. The system is intended chiefly to serve Arabic-reading users of road signs and maps and enable them to read Hebrew place names in Israel.